

The Century Guild Hobby Horse

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“It has been said that an esoteric periodical with presumably a very limited circulation could never have affected popular taste. Against this fact, which in one sense is true, must be set a still more important truth, that very few people receive influence at first hand.”¹

The Studio, on the *Century Guild Hobby Horse*, 1898

By the time that the tiny clutch of British artists known as the Century Guild banded together in the early 1880s to advocate for the unity of the arts, a protocol for launching a formal artistic group had been well established: identify members, define an aesthetic philosophy, and—perhaps most importantly—publish a periodical espousing that philosophy. This model was famously typified by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and their organ, *The Germ* (1850). Though short-lived and commercially unsuccessful, the *Germ* proved to be enormously influential in establishing the group’s ideology and style, its four issues filled with the work of writers and artists who would go on to define a major incarnation of the mid-Victorian arts. For the Brotherhood, whose interests comprised both the textual and visual arts, a journal was a natural medium, even if its scant use of illustrations forced a focus on the literary. For the Century Guild—a group with never more than three members, craftsmen whose primary fields of expertise included architecture, stained glass work, and design—the literary magazine, theirs a quarterly titled the *Century Guild Hobby Horse* (1884, 1886-1894; hereafter referred to as the *CGHH*), was an uncomfortable fit at best. A journal’s success depended on sales and positive notices in the cheap, widely available, and mass produced periodical press. These qualities were pitted against the aims of the group, which remained committed to exclusivity as opposed to expansion, to the cult of handcraftsmanship staged largely in protest to mass production, and to creative modes (e.g. building decoration, wood carving) expressly not literary in nature. In pointing out these areas of friction, I do not mean to disparage the Century Guild’s project or to

¹ “The Work of Mr. Selwyn Image, Part 1,” *The Studio* 14 (1898): 7.

discount the significance of the *CGHH*. I suggest instead that it is this very tension, a tension that ensured the ultimate failure of the journal, which formed the basis of the Century Guild's profound impact on the shape and circulation of artistic and literary media in fin de siècle Britain.

Specifically, as a result of those fissures, novel modes of dissemination developed, and the peculiarities of the *CGHH* allowed it to serve as a hub from which a variety of new, more specialized forms emerged. The material aspects of the *CGHH*'s production paved the way for the fine art book presses of the late 1880s and 1890s, including William Morris's Kelmscott Press and Charles Shannon and Charles Ricketts's Vale Press. Rich, high quality reproductions of art and design would be taken up by magazines such as *The Studio* (founded 1893), while the journal-as-art-object gave rise to beautifully-produced quarterlies such as Shannon and Ricketts's *The Dial*.² And the nuanced commercial aspect of the *CGHH*—which eschewed most conventional advertising in favor of a restrained directory of Guild-approved providers and live exhibitions—was the antecedent of the Arts and Crafts Exhibitions Society. In the generic muddle of the *CGHH*, then, were the beginnings of an expanding web of methods to communicate artistic ideas and to promote artistic products.

This dynamic of generic development might be considered as one of evolution: the literary journal giving way to other modes of communication, promotion, and reproduction. But the literary journal—as a genre—never became irrelevant. To wit, the so-called “Little Magazines” of the turn of the century helped to define Modernism in compelling ways that might not have been possible in other formats. Rather than considering the Century Guild as the single progenitor of a unidirectional aesthetic genealogy or considering its legacy in terms of a linear chronology, it is useful to turn to the network as a form that might help illuminate the rich dynamic of influences instantiated by the *CGHH*. What I am suggesting is an application of network analyses to literary forms, an approach already embraced in some corners of literary and cultural studies. Both Caroline Levine and Julie Codell have argued convincingly that generic and formal conventions can be manipulated to represent complex socio-cultural networks as well

² Frost lists *The Quarto*, *The Savoy*, *The Evergreen*, *The Pageant*, *The Dial*, and *The Dome* as journals influenced by the *CGHH*. Peter Frost, “*The Century Guild Hobby Horse* and its Founders,” *Book Collector* 27, no. 3 (Autumn 1978), 359.

as to challenge or subvert those networks.³ Levine has recently further raised the stakes of network analysis, suggesting that the concept of the “network” might fruitfully displace the ossified notions of nation that continue to define (and limit) Victorian studies.⁴ In Levine’s approach, the significance of discrete social, political, economic, and physical networks inheres through their relation to a larger, social whole, and in particular the way that these “forms run up against each other, and the consequences their encounters bring into the world.”⁵ Scholarship on Victorian periodicals has taken up the way that their forms and conventions, as opposed to the larger concerns of social exchange that attend those conventions, can be elucidated by considering them in terms of network formation and function. Laurel Brake draws on Friedrich Kittler’s work to argue that studying often-overlooked aspects of the material deployment of literary and social networks—and in relation to periodicals, these include printers, engravers, and designers— “helps us to understand the formats of what we read, how production and functions shape the artefact, and how the technic, along with the editorial, graphic, and advertising content and the authorial and editorial interventions, supplements its meaning.”⁶ Following Brake, I suggest that the technic not only supplements the meaning of the artefact, but also it impinges upon the very possibility of the existence of the artefact or its mode of production. In other words, the *CGHH* did not simply inspire later artists and writers through its content; the formal missteps of the *CGHH* as literary journal helped to define new paths, leading to the development of a range of artistic and literary forms.

“The Guild Flag’s Unfurling”: Establishing the *Century Guild Hobby Horse*

To grasp why a group of artisans would chose a venue that seems so ill suited to their ultimate goals, it is important to understand the terrain into which the *CGHH* entered. There were by the

³ See Caroline Levine, “Narrative Networks: *Bleak House* and the Affordances of Form,” *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 42, no. 3 (2009): 517-23; and Julie Codell, “The Art Press and its Parodies: Unravelling Networks in Swinburne’s 1868 Academy Notes,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 44, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 165-83.

⁴ Caroline Levine, “From Nation to Network,” *Victorian Studies* 55, no. 4 (Summer 2013): 647-666; and *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 112-31.

⁵ Levine, *Forms*, 120.

⁶ Laurel Brake, ““Times Turbulence”: Mapping Journalism Networks,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 44, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 124.

mid 1880s varying models for literary coteries, but nearly all of them featured a text-based organ. Some, including an extraordinary number of author societies, sponsored publications devoted to the work of their charges; these included the Early English Text Society (founded 1864), Chaucer Society (founded 1868), New Shakespeare Society (founded 1873), Browning Society (founded 1881), and Shelley Society (founded 1886). Of the three Guild members—Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo (1851-1942), Selwyn Image (1849-1930), and Herbert P. Horne (1864-1916)—Mackmurdo and Image studied under John Ruskin at Oxford, where slightly different models of publications were on offer.⁷ In addition to *The Germ*, these included *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (1856), another journal founded by an ideologically like-minded, self-styled brotherhood. Dozens of other student-edited or student-driven literary publications appeared through the second half of the nineteenth century—the best known of which is likely *The Dark Blue* (1871-73)—either to advance the aesthetic or social vision of their producers or intended audiences.⁸ Examples such as these suggest that for those with shared aesthetic sympathies, the literary journal was an acceptable, if not *the* acceptable, mode of documenting and disseminating the group's work and ideas. Further reinforcing the value of the literary magazine were the countless dailies and weeklies which announced or reviewed current periodicals. Widely read newspapers including the *Graphic* and the *Morning Post* featured regular columns on “The Magazines,” highlighting articles or important new publications, thereby increasing the reach of those pieces. As James Curran established in his early work on artistic networks, “the act of regular critical appraisal affirms the value of the field in which the appraisal is being made.”⁹ Literary magazine reviews, in other words, beget literary magazines.

Concomitant with the ascendancy of the literary journal as a means of disseminating aesthetic ideology was the professionalization of the critic and the evolution of the private gallery; from these media grew an increasingly interdependent system of artists, dealers, and

⁷ It is difficult to know whether to count Image among the “official” Century Guild members. Certainly he was part of this exclusive inner circle and elemental to the *CGHH*, but accounts vary as to whether he was a formal member and, if so, the length of his formal affiliation.

⁸ For a listing of such journals, see Joanne Shattock, *The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, vol. 4, 1800-1900 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); and Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, eds., *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent: Academia Press, 2009).

⁹ James Curran, *Media and Democracy* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 189.

critics, who by the 1880s could work in coordination to increase interest in, demand for, and sales of art and artistic goods. Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich write that “as the art market expanded and became less centered on the Royal Academy . . . the press played an increasingly visible partisan role, with critics and journals acting as advocates for particular schools or artists.”¹⁰ Fletcher and Helmreich demonstrate that periodicals—such as P. H. Hammerton’s *The Portfolio* (founded 1870) or *The Magazine of Art* under W. E. Henley (1881-86)—could help “coalesce” public taste for a particular artist, school, or aesthetic principle.¹¹ The often overlapping relationships of artist, press, and market, involved “personal and professional networks of friendship, the financial pressures of advertising and circulation on editorial content, and the fluidity of roles in the not yet fully professionalized art market.”¹² Century Guild members and the artisans in their circle were in many ways a part of these developing groups, but because their chosen media were excluded from the arts deemed worthy of exhibition in most galleries—whether in the Royal Academy or in the burgeoning private scene—here too they were not a natural fit.

Armed with these models and with inherited wealth, Mackmurdo distributed a prospectus for his new magazine in March 1884, some two years after the formation of the Guild. What ultimately set the *CGHH* apart from earlier iterations of art journals was its production: each issue was a material demonstration of the Guild’s philosophy. Curiously, though, in the prospectus for the journal those production values were deemphasized in favor of the declaration of an aesthetic ideal that depended heavily on existing models.¹³ In his explanation of the group’s motivation for launching the journal, Mackmurdo noted that the content fell outside of their native crafts: “We desire to give in some form, other than that of our special craft, articulate and permanent expression to what seem to us some of the finer pulsations and choicer impulses

¹⁰ Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich, “The Periodical and the Art Market: Investigating the ‘Dealer-Critic System’ in Victorian England,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 41, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 324.

¹¹ Fletcher and Helmreich, “The Periodical and the Art Market,” 327.

¹² Fletcher and Helmreich, “The Periodical and the Art Market,” 342.

¹³ This approach can be fruitfully compared to that of the *Yellow Book*’s proprietors, who (perhaps learning from the *CGHH*’s example) emphasized the to-be journal’s “mechanical excellence,” declaring that it would “be as nearly perfect as it can be made.” “Announcement for *The Yellow Book: An Illustrated Quarterly*,” (London: Elkin Matthews and John Lane, 1894), 1.

of modern life, as felt throbbing through the artistic world in which we chance to live.”¹⁴ Here, Mackmurdo baldly adopts Paterian diction—his “finer pulsations and choicer impulses of modern life” echoes the “pulses. . . of a variegated, dramatic life” that fuel the “gem-like flame” vaunted in Pater’s famous conclusion to *Studies in the Renaissance*—to situate the *CGHH* in the context of Aesthetic theory that was both clearly defined and widely known by the mid 1880s.¹⁵ That is to say, rather than setting the *CGHH* apart from mainstream artistic movements, the prospectus seemed to suggest that the Guild’s members were adding their voices to an already-strong chorus of Aesthetic advocates.¹⁶ The connection was not lost on critics, who implicitly and explicitly linked the Century Guild’s forthcoming project with a version of Aestheticism that—though reductive—aligned Paterian enthusiasm for embodied experience with the performative affectations of Oscar Wilde who, in 1884, had no affiliation whatsoever with the Guild or its members. The *Edinburgh Evening News*, for example, wrote that: “A mutual admiration society known, or rather unknown, as ‘The Century Guild’ proposes to publish a periodical to be called ‘The Century Guild Hobby-Horse.’ A prospectus has been issued... which for quaint humour may almost be unrivaled even in this age of Postlethwaitism”¹⁷ Postlethwaite, as readers would certainly have known, referred to one of the Wilde-esque Aesthetes in George Du Maurier’s satirical caricatures for *Punch*, and the “mutual admiration society” was a common sobriquet used by Du Maurier and others to characterize those adopting Aestheticism.¹⁸

The connection to Pater and the Aesthetes might have been expedient for advertising a new journal, but it nevertheless helped to muddy the vision espoused by the Guild members. As

¹⁴ A. H. Mackmurdo, Prospectus for the *Century Guild Hobby Horse* (1884).

¹⁵ Walter Pater, “Conclusion,” *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1873), 210.

¹⁶ Nor was this affiliation fleeting. A year after it ceased publication, Thomas Plowman would describe the *CGHH* as “the last of the aesthetic organs.” “The Aesthetes: The Story of a Nineteenth-Century Cult” *Pall Mall Magazine* 5 (January 1895): 29.

¹⁷ *Edinburgh Evening News*, 20 March 1884, 2. The *Pall Mall Gazette* similarly described the Guild as “a small but fervent set of mutual admirers.” “Literary Notes,” *Pall Mall Gazette* 6 March 1884, 6.

¹⁸ The link between Wilde and the *CGHH* persisted. Prior to the January 1886 issue—many months before Wilde contributed his first piece to the magazine—a preview of the journal in the *Leeds Mercury* concluded that “All we can say at present regarding the Hobby Horse is that it is fearfully and wonderfully aesthetic. The type, paper, illustrations, literature—all suggest Mr. Oscar Wilde and the school of which he aspires to be chief.” “January Magazines,” *Leeds Mercury*, 30 December 1885, 6.

familiar as the Aesthetic connections might have been, they were not widely regarded as serious, and affiliating the emerging journal with Du Maurier's caricatures did little to help its reception. Aesthetes were critiqued as poseurs, dilettantes, and—as became explicitly apparent in the James McNeill Whistler's 1885 *Ten O'Clock* lecture and the responses it drew—mere critics as opposed to practicing artists. Such qualities would seem to be anathema to the Guild's philosophy. To be sure, this vision of Aestheticism is reductive, and the Guild's manifesto shared a great deal in common with the robust Aesthetic philosophy developed by many in the Guild's circle. But as a marketing strategy, Mackmurdo's overtly Aesthetic locutions were perhaps inadvisable. If affinity with the Aesthetes placed Mackmurdo and company's enterprise on slightly shaky ground with the press, they further alienated themselves from mainstream journalists and potential readers alike through seeming antagonism towards these audiences. Mackmurdo declared that the Guild's focus on the unification of the arts would serve as “sufficient security against commission of the commoner literary offenses inevitably following a system of publication, that makes literature but a creature of commerce, made for a market, cried at the corners, and bought to sate a hunger that habits of chronic greed have rendered tasteless.”¹⁹ As if describing readerly appetites as “tasteless” is not enough, in his opaque, manifesto-like contribution to the 1884 issue, titled “The Guild Flag's Unfurling,” Mackmurdo further suggests that the journal's founders did not expect anyone outside of their closest circle to read it: “In case our ‘Hobby Horse’ ride out, unknown to us, into circles beyond those compassing personal friends, we think it well, by way of introduction, to give such new acquaintances some fair notion of the intention and character of our union; some unburdening of our hobbies; some reasons for riding them then and now again through a public highway—a highway that is too frequently, a veritable ‘rotten row.’”²⁰ This could be read (and, to judge from contemporary reviews, it was read) as demonstrating dismissiveness toward the reading public at large, who take to fashions in art as they take to the mere showy pretense of “rotten row.” It is an isolationist sentiment buttressed by the journal's content: Julie Codell writes that “most *CGHH* writers expressed little or no hope of changing the taste of their contemporaries.”²¹ Even if he believed

¹⁹ Mackmurdo, Prospectus (1884).

²⁰ Mackmurdo, “The Guild Flag's Unfurling” *Century Guild Hobby Horse* 1, no. 1 (April 1884): 2.

²¹ Julie Codell, “The Century Guild Hobby Horse, 1884-1894,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 16, no. 2 (Summer 1983): 51.

he was preaching to the choir, Mackurdo's initial phrasing is discordant, especially in an opening issue: if the point of the organ is to disseminate the Guild's vision of art, wouldn't he expect that it would circulate among "circles beyond those compassing personal friends"? And how would its broad dissemination occur "unknown" to the Guild members who produced a journal to that very end?

Some early critics regarded these mixed messages as evidence of the journal's (and its authors') ineptitude. *The Liverpool Mercury*, for example, was not impressed, describing the opening number as "the most ludicrously feeble yet foolishly pretentious exhibition of the kind of literary affectation," that was the hallmark of Ruskin's followers, before concluding that "nothing sillier has ever encountered our knowledge than much of the writing in the 'Hobby Horse.'" ²² Others honed in on the generic friction. The *Bibliographer*, more circumspect in its critique than the Liverpool paper, opens its notice with a remarkable statement: "We do not know exactly how to notice this book." (It is true that the opening number includes as many poems as pieces of art criticism and only one featured illustration aside from the cover.) After quoting Mackmurdo's manifesto, the writer offers a backhanded critique, "We suspect by the style of writing which runs through this *CGHH* that the members are very young men," before again offering an assessment that is cutting in its restraint: "They have certainly produced a singular book." ²³ Critics in art-based journals were no more generous than those in literary journals. In the *Magazine of Art*, the works of art criticism in the debut issue was scorned as having "nothing indeed to distinguish them from the most amateurish efforts, save some instances of deboshed Ruskinism in a criticism on two paintings by Margheritone and Cimabue." Wondering if the *CGHH* could fulfilling its intention of addressing all of the art in the National Gallery, the reviewer mused that the "the Hobby Horse may suffer metempsychosis into Pegasus, and distain still more—and with a still greater enthusiasm of profanity—the bounds of English prose and common sense." ²⁴

Perhaps stung by such criticism, the *CGHH* retreated until January 1886, when a new series was issued. Some changes were made—Horne took over as primary editor, for example,

²² "Literary Notes," *Liverpool Mercury*, 3 June 1884, 5.

²³ "Reviews," *Bibliographer*, 1 July 1884, 51.

²⁴ "Review of the *Century Guild Hobby Horse*," *Magazine of Art* (August 1884): 44.

and the dimensions of the journal increased—yet confusion about the journal’s focus remained, expressed by friends as well as critics. When Mackmurdo contacted Ford Madox Brown to ask his friend to contribute to the journal, Brown responded warmly but noted that he was “really rather puzzled to know what to send. The whole character of the paper seems rather more architectonic than [his] style of work.”²⁵ While the magazine’s format remained similar throughout the remainder of its main six-year run, its content shifted ever further towards the literary, and to the extent that there was a slow thaw in the critical regard for the journal, it corresponds with this movement into increasingly conventional literary-magazine territory, veering away from its original intention. By 1891, Peter Frost writes, “literature now became the art form at the centre of the magazine’s interests,” but that tendency was pronounced from the outset.²⁶ The journal’s most prominent (and most prominently advertised) essays were indeed those by well-known writers and critics, not Guild members, and often on topics of literary or art history. In July 1886, Wilde contributed an essay on an early manuscript of Keats’s “Sonnet on Blue” that received favorable notices, as did Ruskin’s essay on Burgess, reproductions of Blake’s illustrations, and the publication of an unpublished poem by Matthew Arnold.²⁷ Blake was, as Codell notes, a “touchstone” for the Guild members, representing both a melding of the arts and an example of art “in which meaning was decidedly not naturalistic, but was the product of ideas that transform experience,” and his frequent appearance in the journal helped to shore up the perception of its quality.²⁸ My primary concern is with the journal’s form as opposed to its content, which, as recent scholars such as Codell and Ian Fletcher have ably demonstrated, offers compelling and innovative art historical and literary readings.²⁹ Still, it must be noted that the

²⁵ Letter to A. H. Mackmurdo, 27 December 1885. British Library R.P. 2125ii Box 40, 942 D. Though the correspondence reveals his ongoing concern about the mode and quality of the reproduction, Brown did allow his “Entombment” to be included in the April 1886 issue along with notes by William Michael Rossetti.

²⁶ Frost, “*The Century Guild Hobby Horse*,” 356.

²⁷ See, for example, “Mr. Ruskin’s Wood Engraver,” *Pall Mall Gazette* 15 April 1887, 5; “Literature and Art,” *Worcester Journal*, 26 March 1887, 6; and “Social and Personal,” *Western Daily News*, 8 April 1890, 7.

²⁸ Codell, “*The Century Guild Hobby Horse*,” 48.

²⁹ Ian Fletcher’s *Rediscovering Herbert Horne: Architect, Typographer, Art Historian* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1990) remains the definitive study of Horne. Codell argues that the journal “articulated a rising historical awareness applied to the study of art” that “foreshadowed the modern art historical methods of

nuances of the Guild philosophy were scarcely recognized or addressed during the journal's original run.

Even when the intended goal of the *CGHH* was acknowledged by contemporary readers, it seems that the idea of “unity of the arts” was understood in remarkably narrow terms. In a notice of the July 1887 issue, the *Manchester Courier* reiterated the Guild's dedication to “render all branches of art the sphere no longer of the tradesman, but of the artist” before acknowledging that “in this number, the articles are principally devoted to literature, art being mainly represented in the three illustrations.”³⁰ Nevertheless, even as the writer describes the issue as successfully forwarding the Guild's goals, the artists responsible for the illustrations cited—Burne-Jones, Rossetti, and Blake—could hardly be regarded as tradesmen, and two of those pictorial works are overtly literary in nature.³¹ The clearest limitation of the literary journal as genre seems to be that, regardless of the editors' and authors' exhortations of unity of the arts or dedication to the valuation of craft and design, the *CGHH* was received and judged in the popular press almost solely on its literary qualities. At the end of the second volume, the *Pall Mall Gazette* took stock. While praising as ever the publication of the Blake's work—in this case the original text of his “Marriage of Heaven and Hell”—they launched the following critique: “With regard to the original contents of the magazine, we will venture...to give the contributors a piece of advice for the future...The ‘Century Guild’ have a true gospel—the unity, namely, of the arts, and the elevation of the workman into an artist. If they find few to believe their report, it is because they do not make it intelligible. ...The profane are likely to smile at prophets who preach the unity of the arts in such artless language.”³² Intelligibility here is a function of the prose featured in the magazine. What is regarded as poor literary craftsmanship overwhelms any other kind.

documentation, visual analysis, comparison-contrast approach, and the examination of the relationship of a work to its historical precedents or sources and to the tastes of its own age.” “The Century Guild Hobby Horse” 51, 48.

³⁰ “The Magazines,” *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 6 July 1887, 3.

³¹ Blake's “Sibylline Leaf on Homer and Virgil” is a bordered, illustrated page of prose on the two poets, and Burne-Jones's “Quæ est ista, quæ ascendit de deserto, deliciis affluens, innixa super dilectum suum?” depicts verses from Song of Solomon.

³² “The Century Guild Hobby Horse,” *Pall Mall Gazette*, 17 October 1887, 3.

‘Harmony between the type and the decoration’: *The Century Guild Hobby Horse* and the Fine Art Press

By focusing on the journal’s literariness, critics overlooked some of its qualities that proved to be most influential. If one considers some of the offshoots that took their cue from the *CGHH*, the promise and the potential of its generic muddle becomes more prominent than its literary limitations; one of the most pronounced influences was due to the tactile, material qualities of the publication. While there were journals devoted to art that preceded the *CGHH*, none devoted such care to production: the *Artist and Journal of Home Culture* (1880-1902) was, for example, unillustrated; the *Magazine of Art* seemed to depend upon the intrinsic quality of the artworks it reproduced and critiqued and not upon the quality of the reproductions themselves; and the content of even *The Germ* was far more valuable than its flimsy paper and lackluster printing. The *CGHH* was, as Frost puts it, “an entirely new style of magazine, in format and general presentation; even today the appearance, the feel, the whole style of the issue seems remarkable”; James G. Nelson describes the journal as “one of the first expressions of a revival of interest in fine printing.”³³ Not only, then, did the *CGHH* devote itself to the ideal of the unity of the arts, it was consciously positioned as a demonstration of those ideals: a journal *as* art as much as a journal about art.³⁴ Financed by Mackmurdo and therefore not dependent upon subscribers, the journal spared no expense to achieve its look and feel. From its opening number (1884) the work was printed at the Chiswick Press on hand-laid paper with untrimmed edges, with bespoke wood-cut illustrations, photogravure reproductions, and Century-guild designed fonts. The cover, designed by Image, amplified its hand-craftedness, as the first word of the hand-lettered title is abutted under the flag, and the lettering below the image is intentionally crowded (see figure 1). The sense of space encouraged by idiosyncratic design choices were enhanced by the journal’s dimensions. Beginning at around 28x22cm in 1884, by the 1886 re-launch the journal reached an

³³ Frost, “*The Century Guild Hobby Horse*,” 352; James G. Nelson, *Early Nineties: A View from the Bodley Head* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 66.

³⁴ As ever, Frost is on point: “it was the first magazine to become self-conscious, and to see itself as a work of art...This was, in a sense, its undoing, because of a fundamental dichotomy in its own make-up which it could never resolve.” Frost, “*The Century Guild Hobby Horse*,” 359.

impressive 31x22.5cm. The margins, in particular, are something to behold (see figure 2).³⁵ By situating small blocks text on a page with expansive white space, a striking effect is achieved. If traditional printing calls for gutter margins to be larger than the outside margins in order to accommodate binding, the *CGHH* inverted those proportions. Emery Walker, influential printer at the Chiswick press, would go on to give an important lecture on the art of fine printing at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition in 1888 wherein he emphasized the importance of generous margins, espousing an approach adopted and demonstrated by the *CGHH* years before. Walker noted that “margins should, of course, be wide except the inner margins” and, according to his lecture notes, that the “fore-edge and tail [should be] large—especially [the] tail.”³⁶ “When a book is opened in w[hi]ch margins have been well arranged,” he said, “the two pages are seen in the middle” an effect clearly evidenced in many spreads of the *CGHH*, where the gutters are far narrower than the outer margins.³⁷ According to Wilde’s laudatory account of the lecture, Walker offered “a page of music designed by Mr. [Herbert P.] Horne” as a positive example of “harmony between the type and the decoration.”³⁸ Walker’s concern is purely that of design; harmony with the journal’s content is not at issue for him.

Given its quirks of design and production, it is not surprising that the *CGHH* was expensive to produce and constantly lost money. As the Guild members fell out and moved on and Mackmurdo’s finances dried up, the editorship shuttled between Horne and Mackmurdo, and regular quarterly publication ceased in 1892. When a new biannual iteration of the journal³⁹—

³⁵ While the digitization of journals has been of incalculable use for scholars, it is worth noting that the pdf versions of the *CGHH* available through Proquest’s “British Periodicals” database crop the bulk of the margins.

³⁶ Unfortunately, the text of Walker’s talk reproduced in the exhibition catalogue is quite condensed and does not give a full account of his remarks or examples. See “An Essay on Printing,” Appendix B in *Collected Letters of William Morris, Volume II, Part B: 1885-1888*, ed. Norman Kelvin (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 859-61. William S. Peterson has reproduced Walker’s lecture notes, from which these quotations are taken, in *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris’s Typographical Adventure* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 328.

³⁷ Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press*, 328.

³⁸ Oscar Wilde, “Printing and Printers” *Pall Mall Gazette*, 16 November 1888, 5.

³⁹ Mackmurdo wrests control back and shifts the journal’s focus again back to design. It is a shift that seems to portend the journal’s demise. Frost: “This is a remarkable change from the previous issue, and from the literary point of view, a most disappointing one, though it certainly raises Mackmurdo’s banner in defence of the old cause.” Frost, “*The Century Guild Hobby Horse*,” 358.

now called simply *Hobby Horse* and advertised at a very steep one pound annual rate—failed to attract subscribers, publication ceased after only three issues, in 1894.⁴⁰ Yet many of the very quirks that might have doomed the *CGHH* were in fact taken up, revised, and refined by later publications. In the seminal Aesthetic quarterly the *Yellow Book* (1894-97), the Century Guild's commitment to the inclusion of all the arts in their manifold dimensions was retained even as a greater unity of aesthetic vision characterizes the whole. Images were allowed to stand on their own, unaccompanied by text and, as Linda Dowling notes, "it is likely that [the *Yellow Book*'s editors] learned from the contents-page of the *Hobby Horse*, which ... listed separately and with equal headings its essays, poems, and 'illustrations.'"⁴¹ *The Studio*, like the *CGHH*, worked to address all of the arts, as is evident in the magazine's subtitle: "An Illustrated Magazine of Fine and Applied Art." And like the *CGHH*, the *Studio* featured high quality reproductions, but by narrowing the focus to the arts and mostly excluding, for example, literary history, literary criticism, and poetry, the *Studio* was better able to identify and reach a target audience. Further, its 1shilling/issue price made it far more affordable.⁴² Also adopting the Guild's embrace of unity of the arts was the *Dome*. Here too the subtitle is telling—"A Quarterly containing Examples of All the Arts"—as is the table of contents, which is divided into "Architecture" (sometimes including Sculpture); "Literature"; "Drawing, Painting, and Engraving"; and "Music."

Perhaps more significant is the legacy of the material qualities of the *CGHH*. The *Yellow Book* and, to some degree, the *Savoy* adopted its Caslon typeface and wide margins. *The*

⁴⁰ John Stokes, "Century Guild Hobby Horse" in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*, eds. Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), 103-104. As a point of comparison, consider W. T. Stead's statement that "From 1890 to 1898 the ruling price for all new publications was sixpence." *The Art of Advertising: Its Theory and Practice Fully Described* (London: T. B. Browne, Ltd., 1899), 140.

⁴¹ Linda Dowling, "Letterpress and Picture in the Literary Periodicals of the 1890s," *The Yearbook of English Studies* 16 (Literary Periodicals, 1896): 120. Dowling writes that the *CGHH* "always" used this format; it appears that they did so in the contents pages for the bound year-long volumes, but contents of individual issues were not always divided in such a manner. As for the *Yellow Book*, in its prospectus the proprietors write that "The pictures will in no case serve as illustrations to the letter-press, but each will stand by itself as an independent contribution. "Announcement for *The Yellow Book*," 1.

⁴² ⁴² *The Studio* long outlasted many of its competitors, running until 1964 when it joined *Studio International*.

Pageant, an annual edited by Charles Shannon and Gleeson White and issued in 1896 and 1897, was a commercially successful, “respectable version” of fin de siècle decadent periodicals like the *Yellow Book* and *Savoy*.⁴³ Like those journals, the *Pageant* employed stylistic conventions of the *CGHH* (wide margins, fine paper) as well as many of the contributors of the *Hobby Horse* stables. In a sense, the *Pageant* was built around the team responsible for perhaps the greatest periodical achievement “obviously inspired by the *Hobby Horse*”: *The Dial*.⁴⁴ As is clear from the journal’s subtitle—“An Occasional Publication”—the *Dial* was not intended to meet the demands of a regular publication schedule. Its editors Charles Shannon and Charles Ricketts were both artists and designers, qualities that are patently evident in the journal’s composition. In it, margins are pushed to extraordinary limits (see figure 3), incredible care was taken with the reproduction process. Shannon and Ricketts were not simply inspired by the *CGHH* as an example: they actively sought out Horne’s help in sourcing providers, developing a network beyond friendship and shared ideas that extended to materials and processes. In one instance, Shannon asked Horne, “Do you know anyone who can take careful proofs from Woodblocks?”⁴⁵ And in a moment of commiseration, Shannon bemoaned the delays slowing the first issue of the *Dial*, writing to Horne that he “really did not know Lithographers, Printers, etc. displayed such enthusiasm in disregarding one’s wishes.”⁴⁶ Such delays might have thwarted even the lax production schedule of the *Dial*, but it was an issue that could be mitigated by taking responsibility for an even greater portion of the production of a work, which is exactly what Shannon and Ricketts went on to do, “[mastering] all the operations which go to the making of a book.”⁴⁷

⁴³ Koenraad Claes, “The Pageant,” in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*, eds. Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), 476.

⁴⁴ James G. Nelson, “The Bodley Head Periodicals” (Appendix C), *The Early Nineties: A View from the Bodley Head* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 303. Dowling’s “Letterpress and Picture in the Literary Periodicals of the 1890s” offers a wealth of additional detail on some typographical conventions of these magazines, including the use of “catch-words.”

⁴⁵ ALS from Charles H. Shannon to Herbert Horne, 15 December 1890, R.P. 2125 (iii) Box 40 942 D.

⁴⁶ ALS from Shannon to Horne, (1889?), British Library R.P. 2125 (iii) Box 40 942 D.

⁴⁷ Holbrook Jackson, “Printing and Fine Printing,” in *Reader in the History of Books and Printing*, ed. Paul A. Winckler (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980) 350.

Arguably the greater legacy of the Century Guild's commitment to employ the finest materials in the production of their journal—paper, binding, typeface, and ornamentations—is the development of another branch of literary production: the works of the fine art book presses of the fin de siècle. Codell regards the *CGHH*'s cultivation of “the interest in, and creation of, beautiful books as art objects” as one of its primary innovations.⁴⁸ Whereas periodicals such as the *Studio* recognized that a high price was an obstacle to a mass readership, these presses, including Shannon and Ricketts's Vale Press (founded 1896) and William Morris's Kelmscott Press (founded 1890), did not try to work against production costs. Instead, they amplified the sense of exclusivity that Mackmurdo hinted at in his original manifesto: the low volumes and high prices that helped sink the *CGHH* became positively valued through limited editions and collectability. Similarly, the material qualities vaunted in the *CGHH* made more sense financially in the book, which—especially when combined with time-tested content and medieval revival fonts and settings—suggested a desirable permanence that stood in sharp contrast to the ephemerality of the quarterly magazine. Shannon and Ricketts's Vale Press focused from its inception on small print runs of canonical works, beginning with Milton's *Early Poems*, though this was not their only focus, with notable exceptions including editions of four works by Michael Field and Ricketts's own work on the history of printing.⁴⁹ Much like the *Dial*, the books of the Vale Press featured fleurons and type designed in house and a consistent use of decorated initials and tailpieces that recalls the *CGHH* (see figure 4).

Many of these design elements lent Vale Press books a medieval quality that is suggested by aspects of the *CGHH*. But the fullest expression of the *CGHH*'s medievalism is likely found in the works of William Morris's Kelmscott Press. For Morris, Emery Walker's lecture at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition—in which Horne's work was used as an example of harmony of type and decoration—was, in the words of Norman Kelvin, “of first importance and reportedly confirmed [Morris] in his intention to embark on his next venture, establishment of the Kelmscott Press.”⁵⁰ At that exhibition, the *CGHH* was displayed, but Morris's printed works

⁴⁸ Codell, “The Century Guild Hobby Horse,” 49.

⁴⁹ Tennyson's *Lyric Poems* (1900) and *In Memoriam* (1900) were offered in their largest print run at 320 copies; the smallest was Maurice de Guérin's *The Centaur and the Bacchante* (1899) at 150. See James Humphry III, “Books from the Vale Press,” *Colby Library Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (1951): 58-67.

⁵⁰ Morris, *Collected Letters*, ed. Norman Kelvin, 838 n. 6.

were not. Morris's lack of enthusiastic praise for the Guild and its organ could be because, according to William S. Peterson, the journal "served as yet another uncomfortable reminder to Morris that his own books were still inadequately printed."⁵¹ Indeed, the focus of the Kelmscott was to produce in small print runs "unique objects using preindustrial methods, handmade materials, and ornate typography and illustration," all qualities that were previewed in the *CGHH*.⁵² The Kelmscott favored medieval iconography: the greatest of the fifty-two volumes produced at the press is generally thought to be their Chaucer, a "pocket cathedral" designed by Morris and illustrated by Burne-Jones with an unabashed commitment to Pre-Raphaelite iconographic anachronism (see figure 5).⁵³ Elizabeth Miller argues that Morris's Kelmscott Press was "pointedly removed from the general flow of mainstream print," designed as a "utopian [space] outside the 'march of progress' narrative (predicting endless expansion) that had accrued to print and to capitalism."⁵⁴ For Morris, then, the design features of the *CGHH* could also be productively adapted to a socially ideological end: the resistance to mass expansion that ultimately contributed to the journal's demise became elemental to the prestige and success of the press.

The *CGHH* may not have directly "sired" the Kelmscott, to borrow one of Frost's terms, but it laid bare the possibilities and potential of the fine art press.⁵⁵ Considering the Kelmscott as

⁵¹ Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press*, 74.

⁵² Elizabeth Miller, *Slow Print: Literary Radicalism and Late Victorian Print Culture* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2013): 26. Peterson similarly argues that "With an engraved cover designed by Selwyn Image (whose Greek type Morris was to use in the following decade) and ornaments by Image, Herbert Horne, and others, the *Century Guild Hobby Horse*—printed, not surprisingly, at the Chiswick Press—anticipates many of Morris's notions about the well-designed page. And, since Morris knew Mackmurdo and others associated with it, there can be no doubt that he was aware of the existence of the *Century Guild Hobby Horse*." Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press*, 74.

⁵³ Burne-Jones made the comment in an 1894 letter to Charles Eliot Norton; cited in William Waters, *Burne-Jones: An Illustrated Life of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, 1833-1898* (1973; Buckinghamshire: Shire Books, 1997), 44. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Art*, the Kelmscott Chaucer is "the press's greatest book, and by common consent one of the world masterpieces of book production." "Kelmscott Press," *Oxford Dictionary of Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 374.

⁵⁴ Miller, *Slow Print*, 26.

⁵⁵ Frost concludes that the journal "certainly sired a whole decade of magazines of art and literature that hankered after the unity of the arts without quite knowing why." "*The Century Guild Hobby Horse* and its Founders," 359.

linked to and adapting the conventions of the *CGHH*, as opposed to a product of the Guild's work, allows us to consider the press's departure from the iconography and design of the journal. J. A. Symonds was keenly aware of that departure, emphasizing it in his retrospective analysis of fine art printing in the 1890s. For Symonds, the *CGHH* iconography—with its sinewy, curvilinear designs—was proto-nouveau, anticipating future artistic movements to the same degree that it revived antiquated medievalisms. Later printing ventures developed both visual directions, sometimes simultaneously. As charmingly anachronistic as some of the Vale Press books are, they deftly combine archaisms with the generous typesetting modelled in the *Dial*. Ricketts's design for Wilde's *The Sphinx* (1894) is a masterwork of avant-garde design, combining neo-classicism, sparse japonisme, and expert use of asymmetry and white space; it has been described as Ricketts's "best book," "a perfect whole, as harmonious as it is dazzling."⁵⁶ In it, Ricketts set as few as four lines of verse at the top of the page, employing catch words at the bottom margin to draw the eye down the empty expanse of the page. Symonds believed the Kelmscott's governing design principles—in contrast those of artists such as Ricketts—to be in many ways a regression. Allowing that "the Kelmscott Press productions created a furore in the early 'Nineties,'" Symonds nevertheless insists that "their expansive, impractical opulence was in itself no solution to a printer's problems, nor did it indicate the direction of reform."⁵⁷ For Symonds, that reform is better reflected in the work of printers like Elkin Mathews and John Lane, who applied material and typographic features of the *CGHH* to mass produced books that were thoughtfully designed (and not merely illustrated). Similarly, for Symonds the *Yellow Book* forwarded the nouveau-inflected, forward-looking style that was emergent in the pages of the *CGHH*. From aesthetic conventions of the *CGHH*, then, a series of branches can be traced: margins, paper choice, interdisciplinary focus, arrangement of the table of contents, exclusivity of intended audience, woodblock illustrations, reproductions using lithography and photogravure, Caslon or other old-type fonts—each of these aspects of the journal's production was adapted and refined, sometimes to very different ends, by multiple media developed in its wake. If the debts to the *CGHH* as model are not always acknowledged, it is perhaps "because its

⁵⁶ Gordon Norton Ray, *The Illustrator and the Book in England from 1790 to 1914* (1976; New York: Dover, 1991), 163.

⁵⁷ John Addington Symonds, "An Unacknowledged Movement in Fine Printing: The Typography of the Eighteen-Nineties," *Fleurbaey* 7 (1930): 89.

influence had been so all-pervading that there seemed to be only one way to produce such magazines.”⁵⁸

Exhibiting “The Century Guild Work”

As Dowling noted, even the table of contents of the *CGHH* was influential in periodical circles, staging as it did an intervention in the conventional relationship between text and images.⁵⁹ Yet another of the journal’s other interventions was ultimately omitted from the contents page. One of the most compelling arguments for the unity of the arts—and one of the most influential in establishing a web of art producers and consumers—can be found in these often-ignored features of the *CGHH*: the directory of Guild-approved artisans and the advertisements that appeared at the end of the issue.⁶⁰ On these pages, printed with the same design principles and on the same paper as the rest of the volume, the framer mingles with the embroidery school, and the draper sits comfortably next to the plaster worker.

In the first 1884 issue, the following notice appeared at the end of the journal, under the title “Examples of ‘Century Guild’”:

⁵⁸ Frost, “*The Century Guild Hobby Horse*,” 359.

⁵⁹ The guild itself, it must be noted, was another site for the dissemination of aesthetic ideals that flourished at the time of the *CGHH*. Charles Robert Ashbee’s Guild and School of Handicraft, established in 1888, is but one notable example, leveraging communal workshops and advertisement to commercial and educational advantage; another successful iteration was the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft (established 1890). A related development was the rise of schools for design, including Ruskin’s Oxford-based School of Drawing (established 1871) and the Birmingham Municipal School of Arts and Crafts under the direction of Charles Taylor.

⁶⁰ Addressing the advertisements is made all the more difficult because many bound versions of the journal often exclude the advertisements; digitized versions like those of Hathi Trust replicate the volume-bound versions, and the digitized versions of the issues on ProQuest’s British Periodicals database exclude some, if not most, of the advertisements. Dowling writes that “*The Hobby Horse* admitted no advertisements to its pages except for a chaste notice describing the availability of Century Guild crafts,” which—while not exactly accurate—does speak to the journal’s “anti-commercial” position. Dowling, “Letterpress and Picture,” 126.

Tapestries, cretonnes, silks, wall papers, furniture, stained glass, modelling, painting, architecture, etc., to be seen at the offices of Mr. A. H. Mackmurdo, 28 Southampton Street, Strand, W. C.; also at Messrs. Collinson and Lock's, 109 Fleet Street, E. C.⁶¹

The title “Examples of ‘Century Guild’ Work” was included in the 1884 table of contents. Later issues featured a formal, picture-less listing under the heading “The Century Guild Work,” though the craftsmen and women included were not limited to Guild members. Over the course of the *CGHH*'s print run, the listings vary from one page to three or four, merely include the nature of the goods—“Embroidery,” “Mezzotints,” “Flint Glass, cut and blown”—and the name and address of the supplier (see figure 6). In some issues, the listings were augmented with one or two pages of more conventional, half- or quarter-page advertisements, often from the same purveyors detailed in the directory. Even these are richly printed and, especially when compared to conventional Victorian periodical advertisements, extraordinarily restrained both in font and image. Other variants blurred the distinction between advertisement and journal content. The very issue that features the Burne-Jones, Rossetti, and Blake images noted by the *Manchester Courier* also includes a three-page advertisement for architectural house plans designed by Horne. But with the same font and header typeface as the other pieces in the issue, its status as an advertisement is unclear. The traditional book listings included by a journal's publishers only creep into the back pages of the *CGHH* in the last few issues, presumably when Mackmurdo's finances were under strain.⁶²

A compelling addition to the end matter was actually documentary in nature: a full-page reproduction of a photograph of the Guild's “Music Room” exhibit at the 1885 Inventions Exhibition in London (see figure 7). As the inclusion of the photograph demonstrates, the value of showing the crafts produced by Guild members and associates within a room-like context—work that often did not fit into existing gallery formats—was an essential part of the Guild's dissemination strategy. The Century Guild's “textiles, wallpapers, furniture, stained glass, metalwork, decorative painting and architectural design” were featured in a series of exhibitions in addition to the Inventions Exhibition: the 1886 Liverpool *Exhibition of Navigation and*

⁶¹ “Examples of ‘Century Guild’,” *Century Guild Hobby Horse* 1, no. 1 (1884): 105.

⁶² These were Elkin Mathews's lists; the firm would go on to publish the journal in its incarnation as *The Hobby Horse*, 1893-4. See Frost, “*The Century Guild Hobby Horse*,” 358-9; and Nelson, *The Early Nineties*, 274-78.

Manufacture and the 1887 Manchester *Royal Jubilee Exhibition*.⁶³ Such events bore the trace of the Great Exhibition of 1851, but even more significant was their legacy: the increasing frequency in exhibitions (and in groups dedicated to sponsoring such exhibitions) in the years following the *CGHH*'s heyday. Realizing that the tactile and three-dimensional qualities of fabrics and furniture were best appreciated in person and in the context of their use, and realizing further that there were, with only limited exceptions, few craft-based equivalents to fine art venues like the Grosvenor Gallery or the annual Royal Academy exhibition, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society (founded 1887) adopted an analogous format, promoting yearly and then triennial exhibitions of arts and crafts design. Walter Crane described the impetus for the Society in his Preface to the catalogue for their first exhibition (1888) in terms that would easily have fit into any of Mackmurdo's contributions to the *CGHH*: "The decorative artist and the handicraftsman have hitherto had but little opportunity of displaying their work in the public eye or rather of appealing to it upon strictly artistic grounds in the same sense as the pictorial artist."⁶⁴ These exhibitions, widely covered in the press, would be perhaps the most important mechanism in forwarding the Arts and Crafts movement. They further blurred the line between display and commerce, art and advertisement, a tendency suggested, if not articulated, by the *CGHH*'s inclusion of directories of guild-approved artisans and photographic evidence of their own contributions to such events within its back pages. As Imogen Hart notes, the subject of the commercialization of the exhibition was an issue from the start, and the question whether prices should be included in the catalogue was a "subject of debate amongst members."⁶⁵ Though at first the exhibition catalogues intentionally excluded prices, Hart writes, "in 1893, the Secretary was prepared to take the purchaser's details and accept a twenty-five-percent deposit, and from 1903, prices were displayed in the catalogue itself."⁶⁶

⁶³ Stuart Evans, "Century Guild of Artists," *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed March 31, 2015, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T015499>.

⁶⁴ Walter Crane, "Preface," *Catalogue of the First Exhibition* (London: Chiswick Press for the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, 1888), 5.

⁶⁵ Imogen Hart, "On the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society." *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*. Ed. Dino Franco Felluga. Extension of *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net*. Web.

⁶⁶ Hart, "On the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society."

If the tensions between the conventions of the fine art catalogue, the ideological underpinnings of the Society, and the desire of both producers and the consumers were previewed in the *CGHH*, it provided other precedents as well. The catalogues for the exhibitions, held at the New Gallery on Regent Street hosted the exhibitions, were printed at the Chiswick Press. A quick survey of the first of those catalogues shows tremendous overlap with the Guild-approved artisans listed in the *CGHH*'s directory. These include furniture and fabrics by Morris, painted glass by Image, pottery and tiles by William De Morgan, printed works by the Chiswick Press and the Typographic Etching Company, drapers Wilkinson and Son, metalwork by George Esling, and carving and terra cotta work by Benjamin Creswick. These artisans, whose contributions to the *Hobby Horse* were indirect at best, nevertheless served as vital links in disseminating the Guild's message via example.

Networks of Influence; Networks of Genre

Relationships of influence are often thought of in terms of individuals. In *The Studio*, itself a journal that reflects iconographic debt to the *CGHH*, the editor wrote in 1899 that Selwyn Image's "actual handiwork might bulk small in a retrospective exhibition of late Victorian art; but his influence would be discerned in the work of many who might possibly have never heard his name." The influence of Image as an individual is difficult to tease apart from the impact of the works he produced in service of the Century Guild. The Guild, according to the *Studio*, had "been a very important factor in the development of the decorative arts during the last ten or fifteen years." As an example of that development, the article cites the decadent, japonisme-inflected illustrations of Beardsley: "It is impossible to look at Aubrey Beardsley's *Morte d'Arthur* without feeling that the interwoven brambles he employed therein so frequently first grew on the wrapper of No. 1 of the 'Hobby Horse.'"⁶⁷ A fin de siècle biographical dictionary entry on Image also addressed his influence in terms of the reach of the title page he designed for the *CGHH*: "many have seen in its outlines the inspiration of much modern decorative work,

⁶⁷ "The Work of Mr. Selwyn Image, Part 1," *The Studio* 14 (1898): 7-8.

such, for instance, as the late Mr. Aubrey Beardsley's incomparable line."⁶⁸ I have suggested in this article that it is in fact productive to think of the conventions of the periodical as links between generic developments: the richly illustrated title page of the *CGHH*—with its condensed, hand-lettered font, its intricate storm of brambles and foliage that at once recalls medieval illumination and anticipates the Art Deco and Nouveau styles—this demonstration of technic helped to establish modes of creative communication that could be taken up, deployed, and adapted by future artisans.

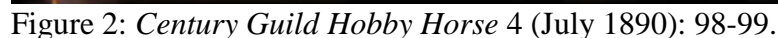
When the *CGHH* first “rode out,” into “circles beyond those compassing personal friends” of its founders, there were few generic options for an organ that could express or demonstrate the goals a group like the Century Guild. The *CGHH*, was conceived as a literary magazine—albeit one which would shirk the crass demands of commerce and unify the arts—and was received as such, with its formal and material innovations generally unnoticed by the popular press. Stretching the genre of the literary journal beyond what its conventional form could accommodate might have ensured the commercial failure of the *Hobby Horse*, but it helped to lay the groundwork for generic expansion and evolution in other directions. Those same aspects of the venture that rendered it ill-suited for literary magazine were cannily exploited through the development of the aesthetic quarterly, the fine art book, and the arts and crafts exhibition; the nodes of this complex generic web combined to form a discrete, though often overlapping network of processes and fonts, suppliers and interested patrons, as each venue was encouraged by the *CGHH*'s to adapt existing generic conventions to new uses. The epigraph for this essay suggests that this “esoteric periodical with presumably a very limited circulation” could in fact affect popular taste, precisely because such influence need not be received “first hand” from the originary source.⁶⁹ Just as influence might be passed from Ruskin to Selwyn Image to Aubrey Beardsley, so too might it be passed from the literary journal to the fine art book to the crafts exhibition.

⁶⁸ “Selwyn Image,” in *Men and Women of the Time: A Dictionary of Contemporaries*, ed. Victor Plarr (London: Routledge, 1899), 556.

⁶⁹ “The Work of Mr. Selwyn Image,” 7.



Figure 1: Selwyn Image, Cover of *Century Guild Hobby Horse* 1 (1884)



50 50 CONTENTS 50 50
50 50 50

CHARLES RICKETTS	"THE MARKED FACE"	40
JOHN GRAY	"PASSIFLOR" IMITATED FROM THE FRENCH OF PAUL VERLAINE	41
HERBERT P. HUNN	"TO THE FLOWERS, TO WEEP" 41	
T. STURGE MOORE	"TO THE MEMORY OF ARTHUR RIMBAUD"	42
Original	"MAURICE DE CUSIN"	
	"ON A PICTURE BY PUVIS DE CHA- VANNES	
	"BITTEN APPLES"	
	"LOVE'S BLEEDING"	
	"THE LITTLE BROWN WOOD-MOUSE"	
	"GUST-DISGUSTED GEESSE"	
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T. STURGE MOORE	"HEART'S DEMENT"	
JOHN GRAY	"LES DEMOISELLES DE SAUVÉ" 43	
Original	"THE UNWRITTEN BOOK"	
	"THE BRIDAL"	
	"ELLA THE SHE-BEAR"	
CHARLES RICKETTS	"SNOW IN SPRING"	47

*The issue is strictly limited
to two hundred copies, numbered,
of which this is . . .*

N^o. 120

THE VALE
1892

Figure 3: Table of Contents, *The Dial* 2 (1892): n.p.

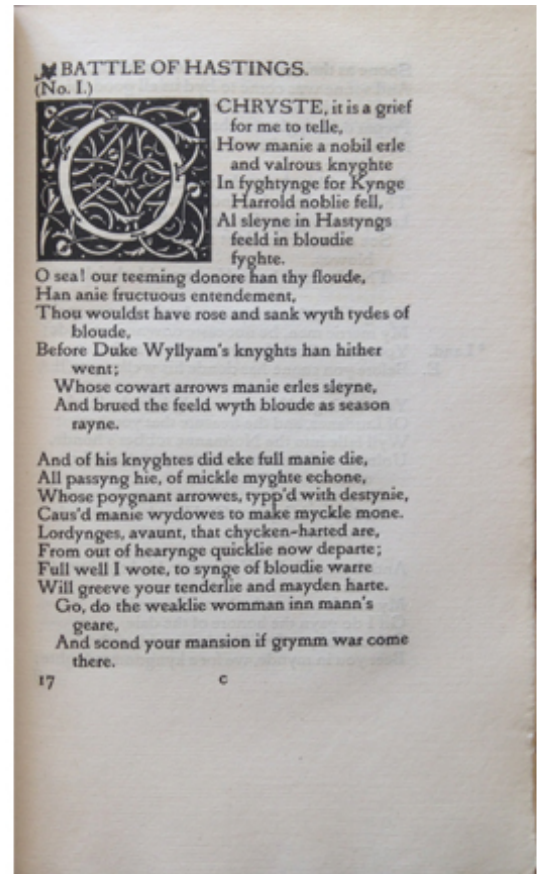
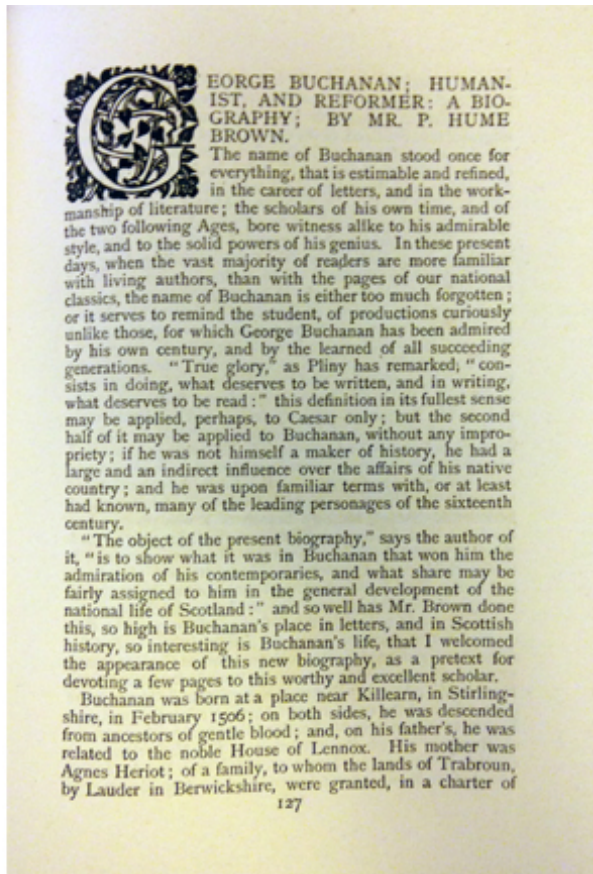


Figure 4: Left: *Century Guild Hobby Horse* 4 (October 1890): 127. Right: *The Rowley Poems of Thomas Chatterton*, Vale Press (1898), 17.

festes, instruments, caroles, daunces,
Lust and array, and alle the circumstaunces
Of love, whiche that I reken and rekne shal,
By ordre weren peynted on the wal,
And mo than I kan make of mencion;
for soothly al the mount of Citheroun,
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellynge,
Was shewed on the wal in portreyng,
With al the gardyn and the lustynesse,
Nat was foryeten the porter Ydelnesse,
Ne Narcissus the faire of yore agon,
Ne yet the folye of kyng Salamon,
And eek the grete strengthe of Hercules,
Chenchauntements of Medea and Circes,
Ne of Turnus with the hardy fiers corage,
The riche Cresus, kaytyf in servage.

WHUS may ye seen that Wysdom ne Richesse,
Beautee ne Sleighte, Strengthe, ne Hardy-
nesse,

Ne may with Venus holde champartye,
for as hir list the world than may she gye.
Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las,
Til they for wo ful ofte seyde, *Allas!*
Suffiseth heere ensamples oon or two,
And though I koude rekene a thousand mo.

THE statue of Venus, glorious for to see,
Was naked, fletynge in the large see,
And fro the navel down al covered was
With waves grene, and brighte as any glas.
A citole in hir right hand hadde she,
And on hir heed, ful semely for to see,
A rose gerland, fressh and wel smellynge,
Above hir heed hir dowes flukerynge.
Biforn hire stood hire sone Cupido,
Upon his shuldres wynges hadde he two,
And blynd he was, as it is often seene;
A bowe he bar and arwes brighte and kene.

WH Y sholde I noght as wel eek telle
yow al
The portreiture that was upon the
wal
Withinne the temple of myghty
Mars the rede?

Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and brede,
Lyk to the estres of the grisly place
That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace,
In thilke colde frosty region,
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.

FIRST, on the wal was peynted a forest
In which ther dwelleth neither man ne best,
With knotty, knarry, bareyne trees olde
Of stubbes sharpe and hidouse to biholde,
In which ther ran a rumbel and a swough,
As though a storm sholde bresten every bough;
And downward from an hille, under a bente,
Ther stood the temple of Mars armypotent,
Wroght al of burned steel, of which the tree
Was long and streit, and gastly for to see;
And therout cam a rage, and such a veze,
That it made alle the gates for to rese.
The northren lyght in at the dores shoon,
for wyndowe on the wal ne was ther noon
Churgh which men myghten any light discerne.

c 2

The dores were al of adamant eterne,
Yelenced overthwart and endelong
With iren tough; and for to make it strong,
Every pyler, the temple to sustene,
Was tonne greet, of iren bright and shene.
Ther saugh I first the derke ymaginyng
Of felonye, and al the compassyng;
The cruel ire, reed as any gleede;
The pykepurs, and eek the pale drede;
The smylere with the knyfe under the cloke;
The shepne brennyng with the blake smoke;
The tresoun of the mordryng in the bedde;
The open werre, with woundes al bibledded;
Contek, with bloody knyfe and sharpe manace;
Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.

The sleere of hymself yet saugh I ther,
His herte/blood bath bathed al his heer;
The nayl ydryven in the shode anyght;
The colde deeth, with mouth gapyng upright.
Amyddes of the temple sat Meschaunce,
With discomfort and sory contenaunce.

ET saugh I Woodnesse, laughynge in his
rage,

Armed compleint, outhees, & fiers outrage,
The careyne in the bush, with throte ycorve;
A thousand slayn, and not of qualm ystorve;
The tiraunt with the pray by force yraft;
The toun destroyed, ther was nothyng laft.
Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres;
The hunte strangled with the wilde beres;
The sowe freten the child right in the cradel;
The cooh yscalded for al his longe ladel.

NOGHT was foryeten by thinfortune of
Marte;

The cartere overryden with his carte,
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.
Ther were also of Martes divisoun,
The barbour, and the bocher; and the smyth
That forgeth sharpe swardes on his styth.
And al above, depeynted in a tour,
Saugh I Conquest sittynge in greet honour
With the sharpe swerde over his heed
Hangynge by a soutil twynes threed.

DEPEYNTE was the slaughtre of Julius,
Of grete Nero, and of Antonius;
Al be that thilke tyme they were unborn,
Yet was hir deeth depeynted therbiforn
By manasyng of Mars, right by figure;
So was it shewed in that portreiture
As is depeynted in the sterres above,
Who shal be sleyn or elles deed for love.
Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde,
I may nat rekene hem alle, though I wolde.

THE statue of Mars upon a carte stood,
Armed, and looked grym as he were wood;
And over his heed ther shynen two figures
Of sterres, that been cleped in scripures,
That oon Puella, that oother Rubeus.
This god of armes was arrayed thus:
A wolf ther stood biforn hym at his feet
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet.
With soutil pencil was depeynt this storie,
In redoutynge of Mars and of his glorie.

The
Knyghtes
Tale

19

Figure 5: *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, Kelmscott Press (1896), 19.

THE CENTURY GUILD.

IN accordance with the lines, which have been for some time past indicated in this magazine, Messrs. Mackmurdo and Horne, architects, and the artists associated with them, are now prepared not only to design and superintend the erection of ecclesiastical and domestic buildings, but, also, to undertake decorating and furnishing of all kinds.

With this end in view, they have opened workshops for the production of furniture and metal-work; and their designs already executed include carpets, cretonnes, stamped and printed velvets, together with silk and woollen textiles, wall-papers, stained-glass and decorative painting.

While recognizing the cost, which, of necessity, accompanies decoration in its more sumptuous and elaborate forms, Messrs. Mackmurdo and Horne are prepared to decorate and furnish houses in a simple, yet effective manner, which, while endeavouring to fulfil the more exacting canons of taste, will not be beyond the means of those, to whom expense is a matter of material concern.

THE ARCHITECTS:

Messrs. MACKMURDO & HORNE, 20, Fitzroy Street, W.

From whom all further particulars may be obtained.

IN drawing attention to our own work, we have added, with their permission, the names of those workers in art whose aim seems to us most nearly to accord with the chief aim of this magazine. Our list at present is necessarily limited, but with time and care we hope to remedy this defect.

EMBROIDERY:

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF ART NEEDLEWORK, Exhibition Road, South Kensington, W.

MISS MAY MORRIS gives private lessons in embroidery, particulars on application, Kelmscott House, Upper Mall, Hammersmith.

ENGRAVED BOOKS AND FACSIMILES OF THE WORKS OF WM. BLAKE:

MR. MUIR, The Blake Press, Edmonton.

To be had of Mr. QUARITCH, 15, Piccadilly, W.

FURNITURE AND DECORATION:

RHODA and AGNES GARRETT, 2, GOWER ST., W.C.

MR. J. ALDAM HEATON, 27, Charlotte St., Bedford Sq., W.C.

Figure 6: First page of Directory of Century Guild craftsmen, *Century Guild Hobby Horse* 5 (October 1890): n.p.



Figure 7: "Century Guild Music Room, Inventions Exhibition," *Century Guild Hobby Horse* 1 (April 1886): n.p.